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**SUBJECT**

## The Port of Gurev

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1. The town of Gurev is located in the Ural River Delta, about 30 km from the sea. The sea in the region where the Ural River enters it has a large number of small islands, of which the largest and most numerous are the Peshny and the Rakushechny Islands. It is necessary to note that over the years the number of islands has gradually increased due to the lowering of the sea level and the heavy silting of the Ural River.
2. The water begins to freeze in the Caspian Sea in the regions from the Gurev sea roadstead to the shoreline between the village of Ganyushkino and Mertviy Kultuk (village of Prorva) between 20 November and 1 December. The ice begins to break up in this region between the 15th and 20th of March. The maximum temperature of water in this region in July reaches 24 to 26 degrees centigrade. The maximum thickness of ice in this region is reached between the 15th and 20th of January and is 400 mm. The average speed of the current in the Ural River is approximately three to four km an hour, but in narrows and bends in the river it is of course, higher.
3. The prevailing winds in Gurev and in the region of the Gurev sea roadstead are as follows:  
  
Winter - northeast, strong and cold;  
Summer - northeast by east, dry;  
Occasionally in summer - southwest (moryana) soft, moist wind.  
  
Maximum strength of winds in Gurev and on the sea roadstead is reached in March, April, May, September, October, and November, and is from 8 to 11 points. Calm weather with winds of one to two points occurs in the period of June and August.
4. The coastline from the village of Ganyushkino to the village of Prorvi is winding and crooked. The shore is low, rough, and for the most part covered with vegetation. Only in the area around the mouth of the Ural is there a dense cover of reed and chakana. The bottom in this area is sandy. The Ural River has a great influence on the silting of the sea at the place where it enters the sea. The river brings in mostly sand and clay. The bottom of the sea where the Ural comes

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in, and further to the west and east, consists of soft shells mixed with sand and clay. Characteristically, the islands in this region consist almost entirely of soft shells.

5. Living and working conditions in Gurev are very hard. The town itself is small and very dirty. The town has an eternal covering of oil soot over it because the population and business use black mineral oil for heating purposes. From the sanitary and hygienic point of view, the town is in very bad shape. Water pipes, for example, have begun to function normally only in recent years in connection with the construction of factory #441. Products and food which are widely used are always in short supply. The electrical supply of the town is in the hands of the administration of factory #441, which naturally tries to fulfill the electrical needs of the factory first and those of the town last. Communications between the town and the industrial centers of the country are very poor, and consist only of the single railroad line Gurev-Ural and Central Asia. Communications by sea routes has been cut short for an undetermined length of time.
6. Up until World War II the seaport functioned more or less normally, and carried on regular trade with Astrakhan. In Gurev during this period sea-going ships of small tonnage were able to enter. To facilitate the entrance of sea-going ships into the port, the Ural-Caspian Channel was constructed and regularly maintained. Ships entered the channel in the area of the Gurev roads and traveled for about 24 km in the sea part of the channel with the island of Bolshoi Peshnoi on the starboard. Passing this island, ships went into the river part of the channel and through the main branch of the Ural River into the port. After the war, the situation changed greatly. Here it is necessary to take into account the circumstances. The Gurev seaport became known as The Gurev Sea Agency of the Reydtanker Company. The Reydtanker Company had the basic task of handling the transferring of petroleum products. Dry cargo carrying to Gurev was of such insufficient importance that the company did not deem it necessary to engage in that type of work. Besides, up to 1947 inclusive, the carrying of petroleum products to Gurev was only on an intermittent basis. Insofar as the carrying of cargo to Gurev did not play a very important role in the shipping business of Reydtanker, it didn't pay the company to keep up the Ural-Caspian Channel. As a result the channel soon went into complete disrepair, and ships were unable to enter the port any more. At the end of 1947 Reydtanker was faced with the problem of organizing regular petroleum shipments to Gurev. The company was then faced with the fact that it could not carry out these shipments because the Ural-Caspian Channel was closed. After a period of time the renovation of the channel was begun, but with great difficulty Glavmorput' of the Ministry of the Merchant Fleet was able to open the sea part of the channel, and even then only to allow ships of shallow draft (not more than two meters) to pass. Attempts to open the river part of the channel ended in complete failure. In 1951, Glavmorput' was given the project of strengthening the sides of the channel. [redacted] the Chief of Glavmorput (fnu) Polyakov, this problem is very difficult and can be solved only in a matter of years. At present, the Ministry of the Merchant Fleet is worried only about keeping the sea part of the channel in operating condition. Even this work takes a great deal of labor and machinery on account of the rapid silting of the channel. As a result, ships can come only to the Gurev roads or to the island of Bolshoi Peshnoi. Closer approach to Gurev is closed except to oil tankers and fishing industry ships. Passenger and dry cargo ships do not go there.

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